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of a huge gift to charity necessitated a certain amount of publicity, Mr. Kennedy probably would never have permitted any of his disbursements to be known. As it was, nobody but himself knew of all of them. His friends occasionally heard of his gifts months after they were made. His associates in the conduct of one charitable enterprise were unlikely to know what he was doing for another, unless the facts should be brought out in spite of his efforts for self-effacement."

#### WILLIAM M. LAFFAN

FROM AN EDITORIAL IN "THE SUN" NOVEMBER 20, 1909, WRITTEN BY THE SECRETARY OF THE MUSEUM, ROBERT W. DE FOREST

WILLIAM M. LAFFAN was one of the group of men who gathered around Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan when he was elected President of The Metropolitan Museum of Art in the fall of 1904, and who, under Mr. Morgan's leadership, have largely directed the policy of the Museum since that time, during which it has made the marvelous progress which the public is only just beginning to realize.

Mr. Morgan's election as president took place on November 21, 1904. Mr. Laffan's official connection with the Museum commenced with his election as trustee in January, 1905. He was immediately appointed a member of the Executive Committee and a member of its committee on purchases. He was also chairman of its sub-committee on Oriental Art. All these positions he held continuously until the day of his death.

The enumeration, however, of Mr. Laffan's official connection with the Museum by no means covers the scope of his activities. There was no department of art to which he was not sympathetic, and no department in which he had not expert knowledge. He was quite as much at home in the Egyptian and classical fields as he was in the painting and sculpture of the Renaissance, and in the Chinese porcelains which he catalogued. He was constantly at the Museum when in this country, making valuable suggestions with regard to arrangement and detail, and the

Museum was as constantly in his mind when abroad, where his relations with leading amateurs and dealers brought to the institution many opportunities for advantageous purchase which would otherwise have escaped it.

His services on the Purchasing Committee were especially valuable by reason of his knowledge of values as well as of his appreciation of the artistic. His taste was unerring; his appreciation in every department of art was of the keenest. It was not the name of the artist, but the intrinsic beauty of the object produced which attracted him.

His services on the Purchasing Committee were quite as valuable on the negative as on the positive side. He knew when to dismiss proposals from further consideration. The confidence of other members of the Committee in his judgment was so great that latterly, when he has been unable to attend in person, some important purchases were only authorized subject to his approval.

He compiled the well-known catalogue of the Morgan collection of Chinese porcelains, which is one of the current publications of the Museum. In reviewing it for the Museum BULLETIN Professor Friedrich Hirth, of Columbia University, the well-known Chinese scholar, concluded his article in the following words:

"The letterpress of the catalogue, prepared by Mr. W. M. L., is mostly short, but to the point. His description of objects is strictly technical, and the judgment exhibited in critical cases betrays the connoisseur of many years' standing. A most interesting chapter of Notes on Porcelain has been added by him by way of introduction. Altogether this valuable catalogue is a worthy counterpart of one of the finest collections in the world."

He signed this catalogue only with his initials. This was, however, a greater disclosure of his personality than he was accustomed to permit. He liked to work quietly, and never sought to figure as the principal actor, however much he had to do with the success of the piece.

In committee meetings his part, like the letterpress of his catalogue, was

"mostly short, but to the point." Indeed, had he been a college classmate, I should have suspected him of having adopted as a motto that of one of our college societies of the time: "*Causa latet, vis est notissima.*"

His force and power certainly were notable, however quietly his influence was exercised.

My personal relations with Mr. Laffan began only at the time when he became a trustee of our Museum. It was apparent to me at the first meeting that our views as to Museum policy and Museum development were very sympathetic, and they have continued so ever since. He was always full of suggestion, intensely practical, bold when occasion called for boldness, careful and diplomatic when diplomacy was in order. This common interest has grown into a relation in other matters which has lately approached intimacy. Only those closely connected with the Museum will know the extent of its loss in his death. More nearly than any other person he took that part in its affairs in later years as an expert adviser in all departments of art which in its early history was taken by that well-known amateur, the late Samuel P. Avery. R. W. DE F.

#### CHARLES STEWART SMITH

CHARLES STEWART SMITH died at his home in New York on November 30th. He was a Trustee of the Museum continuously since 1889, and has served as a member of its Executive Committee since 1896. There is no committee of the Museum of which he has not at one time or another been an important and influential member. He took part in the movement to found the Museum which antedated its incorporation, and has been a member of the Corporation since its organization in 1871.

His chief gift to the Museum was a large and important collection of Japanese ceramics and other objects of Japanese art obtained when traveling in the Orient.

Few men in the city of New York have been better known for their public spirit and public service than Mr. Charles Stewart

Smith. He was elected President of the Chamber of Commerce for seven successive terms. He declined a nomination for Mayor of New York in 1894. He was a member of the first Rapid Transit Board, to which he was appointed in 1896.

Mr. Smith's position in the community is well illustrated by the following editorial from the *Evening Post* of November 30th:

"That the older generation of New York business men who honorably sustained its reputation as the greatest American mercantile center, long before the days of Sugar Trusts and insurance scandals, is passing with startling rapidity, is recalled anew by the death of Charles Stewart Smith. Conspicuously successful in business, he yet, like Jesup, Kennedy, Hewitt, and many others, felt a civic responsibility resting upon his shoulders. It was no more his idea that a business man should divorce himself from his community's interests than it was his belief that an honest citizen should bow down before the god of things as they are. Quite willing to be accused of besmirching the name of the city if he could better the conditions of misrule under which he lived most of his years, Mr. Smith was successively chairman of the executive committee of the Committee of Seventy which elected Mayor Strong, of the Citizens' Union Executive Committee, when Mr. Low was elected, and in 1900 a member of the Committee of Fifteen. His declination of a mayoralty nomination was proof of the unselfishness of his civic service, as were also his useful labors on the Rapid Transit Board. But the best testimonial to Mr. Smith's esteem among his fellows is his service for eight successive terms as President of the Chamber of Commerce. The city is the poorer for Mr. Smith's death."

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#### THE HUDSON-FULTON EXHIBITION

THE Hudson-Fulton Exhibition closed on November 30th, a gratifying success. Since its opening on September 20th, 288,103 persons have visited it, many of them coming